

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 013811

62

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 013811

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA, EG, US

SUBJECT: TRAINING OF EGYPTIANS IN SAUDI F-5 PROGRAM

REFS: (A) CAIRO 566 (B) JIDDA 306 (C) STATE 009916

(D) JIDDA 240

1. WE HAVE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO PROPOSAL CONTAINED REF (B) AND ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT FROM CAIRO IN REF (A). WE HAVE CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, THAT (A) IN ACCORDANCE WITH EARLIER INSTRUCTIONS, THERE IS TO BE NO US PARTICIPATION OF ANY KIND, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, EITHER BY USAF OR NORTHROP CONTRACT PERSONNEL IN TRAINING OF EGYPTIAN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 013811

PERSONNEL, AND (B) WE MUST AGAIN ASK EGYPTIANS AND SAUDIS

TO SUSPEND TRAINING OF EGYPTIAN PILOTS ON SAUDI F-5 AIR-CRAFT.

2. FOR JIDDA: CHARGE SHOULD RAISE ISSUE WITH PRINCE SULTAN REITERATING REASONS PREVIOUSLY SET FORTH BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON IN JIDDA ON DECEMBER 20 (JIDDA 8358) AND INFORM HIM THAT WE ARE MAKING SIMULTANEOUS APPROACH TO EGYPTIANS. CHARGE SHOULD POINT OUT TO PRINCE SULTAN THAT IF TRAINING CONTINUES AND STORY LEAKS, WE RUN STRONG RISK OF PRECIPITATING A DEBATE IN CONGRESS OVER OUR ENTIRE MILITARY PROGRAM FOR SAUDI ARABIA JUST AT A TIME WHEN

SECURITY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION BEING CONSIDERED BY CONGRESS. THIS COULD CAUSE CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS FOR US AS WE GET READY TO SUBMIT A NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL LETTERS OF OFFER FOR THE SAUDI MILITARY PROGRAM WHICH MR. ATHERTON DISCUSSED WHEN HE MET WITH PRINCE SULTAN. THE DEBATE COULD BECOME EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR US IF CONGRESS WERE TO LEARN THAT TRAINING CONTINUED AFTER WE HAD ASKED THAT IT BE SUSPENDED. IT WOULD INEVITABLY BRING NEW RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION PROVIDING SANCTIONS AGAINST THIRD COUNTRY TRAINING WITHOUT PRIOR USG APPROVAL. FINALLY, IT WOULD ALSO UNDERCUT ANY FUTURE MILITARY PROGRAM WE MIGHT CONTEMPLATE FOR EGYPT.

3. FOR CAIRO: IN ADDITION TO POINTS EARLIER MADE BY ATHERTON WHEN HE MET PRESIDENT SADAT ON DECEMBER 21 (CAIRO 8712), AMBASSADOR SHOULD STATE THAT WE ARE RAISING ISSUE AGAIN WITH SAUDIS AND THAT IF STORY LEAKS, IT WILL JEOPARDIZE OUR EFFORTS TO CAREFULLY LAY GROUNDWORK IN CONGRESS AND US PUBLIC TO ALLOW ADMINISTRATION BE IN A POSITION AT LATER DATE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO CERTAIN EGYPTIAN MILITARY REQUESTS. ADVERSE REACTION LIKELY TO BE ESPECIALLY STRONG IN CONGRESS IF IT SHOULD BECOME KNOWN THAT GOE DID NOT TAKE MEASURES TO WITHDRAW PILOTS AFTER WE ASKED THAT TRAINING PROGRAM BE SUSPENDED. KISSINGER

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